LOVER'S ALWAY

F·B·MEYER

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Dean C. E. Ashcraft

Christmas 1910

Mr. & Mrs. C. E. Ashcraft,

From

Chas. & Mary.

Lovers Alway

This Certifies

That on the _____ day of

_____

in the Year of our Lord 19__

_____

and

_____

were by me united in

Marriage

at _____

_____

Witness _____

_____

Lovers Alway

By F. B. Meyer, B.A.

And now abideth Faith, Hope and Love, these three: but the greatest of these is Love.

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Form for the

Solemnization of Matrimony

[THE PARTS IN BRACKETS THROUGHOUT MAY BE USED OR NOT, AT DISCRETION.]

At the day and time appointed for the solemnization of Matrimony, the persons to be married—having been qualified according to law—standing together, the Man on the right hand and the Woman on the left, the Minister shall say:

DEARLY beloved: we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this man and this woman in holy Matrimony; which is an honorable es-

tate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that exists between Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee, and is commended of Saint Paul to be honorable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God.

Into which holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore, if any can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

[*And also, speaking unto the persons who are to be married, the Minister shall say:*

I REQUIRE and charge you both, that if either of you know any impediment why you may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, you do

now confess it; for be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow are not joined together by God, neither is their Matrimony lawful.]

If no impediment be alleged, then shall the Minister say unto the Man.

MWILT thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health: and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her so long as ye both shall live?

The Man shall answer,

I will.

Then shall the Minister say to the Woman,

NWILT thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love,

honor, and keep him, in sickness and in health: and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him so long as ye both shall live?

The Woman shall answer,

I will.

[*Then the Minister shall cause the Man with his right hand to take the Woman by her right hand, and to say after him as followeth:*

I *M.* take thee *N.* to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance: And thereto I plight thee my faith.

Then shall they loose their hands, and the Woman with her right hand taking the Man by his right hand shall likewise say after the Minister:

I *N.* take thee *M.* to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in

health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance: And thereto I plight thee my faith.]

Then shall the Minister pray thus:

O ETERNAL God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life: send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant between them made, and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[*If the parties desire it, the Man shall here hand a Ring to the Minister, who shall return it to him, and direct him to place it on the third finger of the Woman's left hand. And the Man shall say to the Woman, repeating after the Minister:*

WITH this ring I thee wed, and with my worldly goods I thee endow, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*]

Then shall the Minister join their right hands together and say:

FORASMUCH as *M.* and *N.* have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have pledged their faith either to other, and have declared the same by joining of hands; I pronounce that they are husband and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. *Amen.*

And the Minister shall add this blessing:

GOD the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and so fill you

with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister offer the following prayer:

O GOD of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless this man and this woman, and sow the seeds of eternal life in their hearts, that whatsoever in thy holy word they shall profitably learn, they may indeed fulfill the same. Look, O Lord, mercifully on them from heaven, and bless them: as thou didst send thy blessings upon Abraham and Sarah to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send thy blessings upon this man and this woman, that they, obeying thy will, and always being in safety under thy protection, may abide in thy love unto their lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, who at the beginning didst create our first parents, Adam and

Eve, and didst sanctify and join them together in marriage, pour upon these persons the riches of thy grace, sanctify and bless them, that they may please thee both in body and soul, and live together in holy love unto their lives' end. *Amen.*

Here the Minister may use extemporary prayer.

Then the Minister shall repeat the Lord's Prayer:

OUR Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. *Amen.*

The Wedding-Day

"Hail, wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise: of all things common else.
Far be it I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!"

IT is your wedding-day! Long looked for,—come at last! It seemed once as though the leaden-stepping hours would never reach this happy time; but God has been better than all your fears, and brought you to the long-looked-for goal. Hearty congratulations! May the hours of to-day be as brimful of joy, as flowers and music, the good wishes of the old and the mirth of the young, the blessing of God and man, can make them. And when twenty-five or fifty summers have come and gone, may this day be celebrated by you and the twin-soul with whom you are to wed, as the threshold of a union of ever-increasing blessedness.

The Bridegroom will surely be up with the spring of day, that he may linger longer over his prayers, prayers in which thanksgiving and entreaty will mingle. *Thanksgiving*,—that He who said, *It is not good for man to be alone*, and who made man, male and female, neither complete without the other, has brought to him the Eve who shall answer to his nature and make his Paradise. *Entreaty*,—that he may be enabled to meet the trust reposed in him by the woman's heart which has abandoned itself to his keeping, foregoing all others who, up to this moment, may have counted it an honor to serve her tiniest whim, that in him the full meaning of her being may be realized and completed.

And will not the Bride-elect wait before Him who implanted in her nature that trustful love whose instincts she has followed, not without prayer? No hand can still her fluttering heart, no voice can reassure, no presence can deepen the in-

ward bliss, like His who at Cana made common water redden into the luscious sacramental wine.

There can be no doubt as to the divine institution and authority of marriage. From the time of man's innocency in Eden it has had the Divine Benediction. And Jesus expressly gave the sanction of the new covenant to the primeval command, when He reiterated the ancient words, that a man should leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife, that they might be one flesh. Tender as are the ties of home,—of the mother that bore, of the sister that nursed, of the father that watched the opening life and taught the boy to fly his first arrow, trundle his first hoop, or take his first dive,—all these must yield in strength and tenacity to the call of that masterful love which says of two lives, "Ye shall be no more twain, but one."

The Hindoo holds that man is only a complete being when he becomes a triad,

—man, woman, child. We dare not go so far, while the light of these Christian centuries shines clear on noble characters which have been nurtured in loneliness. In many a saint it has seemed as though the man and the woman, the strong and the tender, the full-grown and the child-like, had blended in one personality. Above all, the holy and complete character of our Master, Christ, the one perfect flower which has unfolded from the stem of our race, forbids the idea that we can only be perfected through marriage. Still, it is true for most of us, in spite of all that has been urged on the other side, that the way to the fullest life is through the wedded life and the discipline of the home.

It is a solemn, as well as a happy, thought that the union of to-day is for life. As the familiar formula puts it, it will hold *till death us do part.* With the one exception of the unnamable act which, by its very nature, violates the

marriage bond, there is no power that can dissolve the sacred coupling of man and wife in matrimony. On one occasion, during His matchless life, our Lord was assailed with the question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" One party among the Jews held that divorce was legitimate on the ground of the least dislike the husband might come to entertain toward his wife, and this was without doubt in their minds when they propounded their enquiry. Our Lord did not hesitate, but led them back to the origin of marriage, where God made one woman for one man, and bade man cleave to her. *What, therefore,* He said, *God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.* From the decision of those lips there can be no appeal.

And for you their chief meaning and importance lies in the blessed assurance that you twain, made for each other, as you have so often said, are deemed from this day, by God and man, as indissolubly one.

That the wedding ceremony may pass without a hitch, that the home festivities may combine grave and gay, tears and laughter, like April weather, but with more sun than shower, that you both may get off at last, not too late for your train, not having forgotten anything of importance, and with not more than one clear evidence of your being newly married—all these kindly wishes go without saying. It might not be amiss, however, to remind you to send some of the flowers, and other decorations to the poor folks or the children of some public institution, that they may rejoice with you.

From the door of many a home, old shoes have been thrown after the carriage in which the happy pair have driven

from the bride's home for their honeymoon. This is said to have originated in the Jewish custom, referred to in the book of Ruth, of transferring authority by taking off and handing over the shoe. If this be so, the idea would be that the father transferred to the bridegroom the right of putting his foot on the neck of the bride—an altogether odious and barbarous conceit. Our modern fashion of throwing handfuls of rice in token of the wish that there may never be a lack of necessaries in the new home, is much to be preferred; and seems to be a reminiscence of the old Aryan homesteads in the far East where rice is the main foodstuff.

Now the long expected hour of union is come. But it must be strongly borne in mind that each must think more of the other than of self. Neither must make self-indulgence or selfish pleasure the rule of thought or action. Each must think of the other more than of self.

Each must place the health, the well-being, the comfort, the inclination of the other first. And if a conflict comes as to which shall yield most utterly to the other, then, as being the stronger of the two, the husband must consider what shall be the best as viewed from the standpoint of the true welfare of the charge confided to him. He must always be the girded loin, the watchful eye, quick to detect the first trace of fatigue, or over-wearied nerves. It is for him to exert the strong will of self-repression that, because she is the weaker, his wife shall always determine the pace with which they tread life's pathway.

In the sacred ties of marriage, there should be the same reverence, delicacy and purity which have prevailed in the preceding months or years of courtship. Reason and the recognition of the Presence of Christ and His holy Angels must ever hold sway over all the relationships of our lives. Whether we eat or drink,

or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God: it always being borne in mind, that nothing which God has created can in itself be common or unclean, except as it is desecrated by the selfish and unholy passion of man.

Shall not the reading of the Word of God, and Prayer, cast a halo of benediction on this memorable day. Does not the very excess of joy call for united expression to the Giver of all good? Is there not need that husband and wife should together commit to Him the keeping of their sacred treasure, that He may guard it from any injury it might suffer from their mistake or sin? And in their prayers let them not forget the hearts that sorely miss them in the family circles they have left.

The Honeymoon

" One heart, one mind, one soul, and one desire,
A kindred fancy, and a sister fire
Of thought and passion; these can love inspire,
This makes a heaven of earth; for this is love."

WHERE you may have chosen to spend your Honeymoon does not fall within my province to enquire. This will have been fixed before this book came into your hands. Its locality perhaps does not matter much, so long as it gives you time to grow together. Nothing could be worse than an attempt to combine with this, a tour of cities, with their inevitable inspection of art-galleries, museums, and other sights. Your only art-gallery should be the pillared vista of the woods, or the slopes of the swelling hills which pellucid lakes reflect. Your sights should be the illumination of the morn-

ing tint or the evening glow on the snow-mountains afire with sunlight.

This at least is certain that Nature always arrays herself in her most attractive dress for eyes that are lit with love. The sun seems never to have shone before, nor the birds to have sung. Such blue was never in God's heaven, such green never on the earth as that which greets love's young sight. Spring's apron never scattered such flowers, and summer's limning hand never wrought with such colors as those which love detects everywhere in the first glad ecstasy of her joy. It is as though she had anticipated the accent of those mighty lips, which shall one day cry "Behold I make all things new"; and at her summons there had emerged a world in which there should be no more tears, nor pain, nor death, because the former things had passed away forever. Even the familiar faces and scenes of ordinary life are transfigured, as when the light shone

on Stephen's face from the opened heavens.

Make much of these glad hours. Let them be the chosen time for the blending of the two hearts, the breaking down of any remaining barriers, the moulding of wills. It will be easier now than ever after to learn how to yield utterly to each other, whilst preserving individuality and self-respect. Individuality, because neither must be content to be an echo, or shadow of the other. Self-respect, because love is founded on respect; we cannot love, though we may pity, those whom we have ceased to respect. Let each ever act so that the twin-soul may have no reason to be ashamed, in the after hour of calm reflection and retrospect.

In the heat of love, two natures may be so welded as to become one, each compensating for the other's variations, that they may together keep perfect tune in heat and cold. But let the welding come naturally and spontaneously. Do not

force it. Let each reverence and respect the nature of the other, and not break in on the temple-shrine with ruthless foot; but on the other hand, let there be no reserve, no coy or shy reticence, no refusal to share the secret treasures of hope, or anticipation, of ambition, or desire. To shut out one another from any chamber of the soul may sow seeds of alienation and estrangement in after days that will mar the perfect unity and bliss essential to a really happy union.

This stands to reason, for it is only in complete fellowship in all interests that the twain can be one. If either one has secrets, plans, friendships, places of resort, apart from the other—subjects on which one cannot speak, doors into chambers one cannot open, envelopes one cannot tear—a barrier is at once reared which will grow into an impassable wall, a tiny rift is opened in the lute which presently will silence all the music of the life.

The wifely heart yearns to be admitted into the secrets of the one she loves, and to open hers to him; but how can this be, unless there is that common understanding between them which makes the exchange of confidences easy, and from which, as a common meeting-ground, they may pass on into that complete interfusing of soul with soul which is the very crown of love. If this understanding and meeting-place are not discovered by the end of the honeymoon, there is every fear that the House of Life will begin to show rents and cracks seriously endangering its stability.

There is nothing better, as we shall see later in these pages, than to find some common interest in which both alike can share, and there is no better time for commencing its pursuit, whether it be the study of poetry, or the collection of natural specimens, than during the days of the honeymoon. I have always felt that the surest guarantee of a happy mar-

ried life is to be found, not in the contrariety of opposites, but in the agreement of similar tastes and pursuits. If there is no bond of common interest, if everything that engrosses the one must needs be explained to the other ; if tastes, dispositions, idiosyncrasies lie wide apart, a want of sympathy will begin to develop. Before either has realized it, there will have been a severance of perfect unity, a slow drift asunder which, like the minute crack in the ice-floe, widens every moment.

Perhaps the woman can best prevent this by throwing herself into her husband's hobbies. Not that she must merge her identity in his, any more than that perfect music, which answers perfect words, ceases to be music. She will always look at every question from her woman's standpoint, and with the quick intuition of her heart, and yet there will be a response, a perfect sympathy, an unaffected interest with whatever things

are just, lovely, and of good report, that may be occupying her husband.

One of the happiest marriages was that of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, each of them gifted with the poet's soul above most. Her Portuguese Sonnets are an unequalled confession of woman's love, whilst there was a world of meaning in his kneeling, after her death, on the steps of Maylebone Church to kiss the spot which she had trodden on their wedding-day—and in each of these noble souls, though they rarely spoke to each other of the specific poems on which they were engaged, there dwelt a similarity of disposition, taste and view-point. Of course, where there is such similarity, as in this case, of taste and genius, care must be exercised that there be no rivalry, no jealousy, no competition, no opportunity of comparison. It is a mistake, for instance, for a woman to preach or paint better than her husband. Yet, after making all possible

deductions, we say again, as the best advice we can give, that the best security of happiness is in similarity of interest, natural or acquired. The story is told of a girl, who detested mathematics till she lost her heart to a mathematical professor, and then she fell in love with them also.

When husband and wife are one in Christ, a new source of mutual affection is opened to them. So far from their prayers being hindered, they are greatly helped. Each watches over the spiritual welfare of the other, with tender solicitude, inciting to further experiences in the Divine Life, and sharing whatever new discoveries have been made in the unsearchable riches of Christ. Thus in the deepest and holiest relationship, they that fear the Lord speak often one to another, and the Lord draws nigh to listen, and a book of remembrance is written before Him for those that think upon His name. The more we love each other, the more we learn of the nature of God

who is Love, and as we know His love, we love each other the more. Thus human and divine love answer to each other and, like reflecting mirrors, act and react on each other endlessly.

It is good to pray, each audibly, and to read the Bible together. To do this at the beginning will be easier than at any subsequent moment. Did our Lord refer to such fellowship when He spoke of being specially with *two* who met in His Name, agreed in the symphony of perfect musical accord? Nothing will more quickly detect any division of feeling, or bring together two souls in mutual confession, forgiveness, and agreement. But this most sacred exercise must never be a substitute for lonely personal fellowship with God. However close our relationship with another, it can never take the place of fellowship with Him. We must continually enter into the Most Holy Place, each soul by itself. To each most loving wife or husband the com-

mand must apply, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret."

A radiant, soul-knitting Honeymoon to you both!

What the Wife Expects from Her Husband

" Let husbands know
Their wives have sense like them ; they see
And smell,
And have their palates both for sweet
And sour
As husbands have."

" I wonder—did you ever count
The value of one human fate,
Or sum the infinite amount
Of one heart's treasure, and the weight
Of life's one venture, and the whole
Concentrate purpose of a Soul ?"

IT is much that a woman gives a man; indeed, she gives *all*. Before, she may have been the centre of a large circle of admirers and lovers, who were sworn to do her tiniest behest; all courtesy, all tenderness, all that love or money could procure, were gladly hers. But when she marries all this is at an end, and in that form at least can never be renewed. How needful, then, that he who now assumes sole charge should so fulfill his part that she may not be disappointed, or cast glances of regret over the vanished past, as having been gladder and better in every way.

Brothers, the sisters whom we have

asked to share our lives with us are women yet, with the woman's heart strong within them, counting that to be with us is better than their former freedom, and that our love will compensate them fully for all that they have forsaken at our call. By the vows we made them when we sought their hand, and by the pledge we plighted at the marriage altar, and by the love we bore and bear, let us not give needless pain. There will necessarily be suffering when business calls us into life's battle, when life goes hardly with us, when through sorrow they bear our children, but let us not add tears and stabs through our carelessness or sin.

They have a right to claim that we should *love and cherish* them. "For better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness, and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part:" so we said once. The second word amplifies and enforces the first. Our love may be strong,

but silent; true, but wanting in expression; deep, but restrained. We may assure our souls that there is so perfect an understanding between us and our wives, that there is no need for the incessant reiteration and assurance. The vows have never been unsaid, the pledges never cancelled, and so, though there has been no recent confirmation, yet there has been no withdrawal, and therefore it may be taken for granted that all remains in force as on the wedding-day! Thus we argue, and yet all the while the woman's heart may be craving for some assurance, a tiny word, or look, or smile, something to feed upon as a sweet morsel, and to turn to as she did to the first letter or gift.

The woman's heart craves for tenderness; not simply for love's dues, but for its dues tenderly expressed. The apples of gold in pictures of silver, the jewel in its casket, and all enwrapped in soft tissue paper. And so, whilst one Apostle

says that the husband is not to be bitter against his wife, and reminds him that she is the weaker vessel, and therefore too frail to stand the jar and shock of rough words, another goes further, and bids the husband nourish and cherish his wife as he would his own flesh. "No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife loveth himself."

"If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange,
And *be* all to me. Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing, and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn? . . .
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Filled by dead eyes, too tender to know change?
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love—
Yet love me—wilt thou? Open thine heart wide,
And fold within the wet wings of thy dove."

Let us ask ourselves, Are we tender enough? Do we nourish and cherish those whom we have sworn to defend?

Might we not have something to regret if we were suddenly called to stand beside the grave? Perhaps a few flowers now would be better than handfuls then; and a loving word to-day than an elaborate epitaph hereafter. Never bitterness on the one hand: but the cheery smile, the kind word, the loving expression on the other.

The wife expects to be always the husband's queen, that the light of love should never die out of his eyes, nor the greeting fade from his face when they meet. The true woman is quite content to have one loyal subject; the walls of her home are the sufficient boundaries of her realm.

She expects also that her husband should treat her as a reasonable being with whom he can hold converse on matters that are filling the public mind, being discussed in newspapers, and deserving careful consideration on the part of each member of the community.

She further expects that her husband will not always give her his most tired moments, when he comes back from the exciting meeting, or the absorbing pursuit of business. She will surely tend him in those hours of reaction, and be quite ready to sit beside him in silence until the tired nervous system has recovered tone; but she does expect that he will not always reserve his vivacity for the larger circles of society, and that her life will be gladdened by his brightest smiles, his most sparkling wit and repartee, his exuberant spirits. For often it happens that the wife carries a secret pain in her heart because others seem able to touch the chords of her husband's life with a lighter, more delicate touch than hers. We must take care, my brothers, to give sparkling water to those that love us best, not always that which is flat and hot.

The wife's heart yearns that the husband should take interest in what she

prepares, whether it be some dainty dish of which he is fond, or a dress which she has put on in honor of some special occasion, or a delicate touch of womanly grace in their home. "I wonder if he will notice it?" she asks herself. If he doesn't, she is a little disappointed. She expects that from his side, he will meet her with little surprises, that on his return from distant journeys, or now and again when there has been a special windfall of success, or on recurring anniversaries of birth or wedding-day, he will bring home some trifle to show that he does not forget.

Let it never be forgotten that the joy of married life is very delicately poised, balance is affected this way or that by trifles. If we are only solicitous of these, the supreme bliss within our reach may be attained.

It may be, that when the first week or two of married life was over, you awoke to the realization of a great mistake. The

girl you had taken to complete your life was not all you had hoped. There was something in her behavior, habits, way of looking at things, manner toward others, that threatened to become a source of perpetual tribulation. You are the soul of order, she untidy; you are punctual to the stroke of a moment, she always late; you are accurate in every detail of your speech, she colors and exaggerates; you are frank and easy, she stands on ceremony and etiquette.

How did you do then? When the first disappointment was over, you may have bent your back beneath your burden with a stoic's strength, and as nature casts out a hard excrescence to cover the tender skin where the shoe pinches or the burden rubs, you may have settled into a grim and hard indifference. It was your fate, you said. And it was out of this that the lack of tenderness, of which we spoke before, probably sprang. It is not invariably so, because we may be too

careless and self-absorbed—but often it is thus. There is a more excellent way. Do not evade the yoke, but take it. Set yourself to remove these spots and wrinkles, and to present this life to yourself without one of them. Go on showing tenderness, if you have not dropped it. Or, if you have, begin to give yourself to it, though it be at first from a stern and unbending sense of duty. Deny yourself; make her first; tell her gently of what in her behavior hurts you most; do not lose your temper when, again and again, she forgets your words; give yourself, as Christ did, to the cross of self-denial; by your suffering and prayer, cleanse her; do not speak to man or woman, but to God; never abandon your high quest, and never rest until you have lifted her to your ideal; love must conquer.

Begin to-day, though the marriage wreaths have withered almost to dust. Do not wait to feel as you should. Will

the right thing; behave in the right way; compel yourself to act according to the highest standards; and as you step out and begin to act love in God's name, His love will fill the channel which your act provides. The emotions and sentiment will follow, and at last the old smile, the old tenderness, the old kiss, will come again.

One of the greatest of our modern story-tellers narrates the experience of a man who, within a month after marriage, awoke to know that he had made a profound mistake. But he locked the secret in his heart, and braced himself to an heroic task. He would never let her know—he would never waken her from her dream. She should think herself his ideal, the queen of his heart, and know no disillusion. And as he strove, he realized that a new love was awakening —not the love of pity, but the love of love, which made life blessed. It was a stronger, nobler, purer, more endur-

ing tie than could have sprung from sentiment or fancy, and it made him hero and saint. Go thou, and do likewise.

What the Husband Expects from His Wife

"A wife, domestic, good, and pure,
Like snail, should keep within her door;
But not, like snail, with silver track,
Place all her wealth upon her back."

—W. W. How.

"Even in the happiest choice, where fav'ring heaven
Has equal love and easy fortune given,
Think not, the husband gained, that all is done;
The prize of happiness must still be won:
And oft the careless find it to their cost,
The lover in the husband may be lost;
The graces might alone his heart allure;
They and the virtues, meeting, must secure."

FIRST and foremost, her husband, according to the inimitable portraiture of the ideal wife given in the closing chapters of the Book of Proverbs, must feel that he may *safely trust her*. Everything hinges here. That she should not tell his secrets or discuss him with her confidantes; that she should be faithful and careful in the administration of his money; that she should be absolutely guileless in her relations with all other men, not seeking their admiration or accepting their clandestine homage. The surest way to forfeit a man's love and heart is to be unfaithful to him. The surest way to keep them is to lock up his words and secrets as in a

golden casket, giving the key to none, but wearing it at the heart. Happy the husband who can safely trust his wife; he will always have a quiet sheltered haven in which to repair his tempest-driven bark; and happy the woman who knows how to listen, how to elicit, how to keep her husband's secrets. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

A woman would better not use her knowledge of her husband's affairs to help him after her own notions. I remember well a case in which this was done. Knowing her husband's difficulties with a certain individual, without consulting with him, she sent for this person and tried to adjust matters, with the result of greatly aggravating the situation; for this man first thought the husband a coward for not dealing with him directly, and finally lost his temper with the wife for presuming to meddle. Lastly, when the husband learned of

what had happened, it seemed to shatter his trust, and from that moment, until years had healed the wound, he could not resume the old perfect interchange of thought. You may mend a fractured globe of glass, but there will always be the crack.

Fénélon says of the duties of a wife: "Let her love her husband next to her God; let her submit to him with mildness and obey him with cheerfulness; let her deserve his confidence by her discretion, her modesty and reserve." There is no doubt that, in the view of the New Testament writers, the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ should be of every man, and must be of His Church. And that shunned word, "obey," is certainly and unhesitatingly suggested by the Apostle Peter; whilst, "submission," is enforced by the Apostle Paul. I am not unaware of the attempts which have been made to minimize the force of these words by the suggestion that they ema-

nated from men's prejudices, and were colored by the usages of the time. My belief in the power and teaching of the Holy Spirit forbids my thus diluting the instructions which He has inspired. And from first to last, all Scripture gives the impression that except where her duty to God interferes, the woman's nature should yield to the man's.

In that rarest of all mausoleums erected for love of woman, the magnificent Taj at Agra, in which the dome of pure white marble soars high in the clear air over the cenotaph of a tenderly loved wife and queen, I noticed that the slab above her remains was fashioned like a slate, whereas that above her husband's, which were interred near by, resembled a penbox, because, according to the thought of that age, woman presents her nature to her husband as a slate, on which he may write what legend he will. This thought is in harmony with the Scriptures we have quoted, and both

agree with the ordinary instinct of human society, which almost resents it as a breach of nature when the woman, as in Burmah, takes the lead and does the business, while man is effeminate and weak.

But, in a rightly-ordered marriage, these questions never occur. At least, relations must have become terribly strained when they do. No loving husband will command his wife, and no true wife will hesitate to count his wish as law whenever it is clearly expressed and is consistent with her loyalty to God, the nature He gave her, and the children to whom she has given birth. But none of these considerations could be ignored by a true man.

"They were so one, it never could be said
Which of them ruled, or which of them obeyed:
He ruled because she would obey, and she,
By obeying him, ruled as well as he.
There ne'er was known between them a dispute
Save which the other's will should execute."

That a woman should love her hus-

band need hardly be repeated; only, let it be noted that such love will find expression. A woman must carefully maintain the little arts and tendernesses of the courting days; not coy, nor artful, not peevish, nor irritable, not obtruding needlessly her preferences and dislikes, nor making much of insignificant and trifling trials; but sweet, bright, tender, inviting the caress, quick to respond to the first movement of love and to return it, perhaps not always waiting for him to woo her, but ever going out to him with welcomes that speak in sparkling eye, and outstretched arms, and kisses that are as fresh as the breath of the sea.

Whatever may have been the trials and worries of the day, the wife should try to greet the husband with a loving smile. Let her run to welcome him at the door as she did once; and accompany him to the doorstep, when he must go forth to meet the world. "The soul's armor is never well set to the heart, unless a

woman's hand has braced it:—and it is only when *she* braces it loosely, that the honor of manhood fails."

And why should she not dress herself as tastily and nattily now, as she did when on tiptoe she listened for the step of her lover? She must not spend their common money in trifles or extravagant dresses; but she can always dress neatly, tastefully, prettily. And if she must wear the same dress till its colors are somewhat faded, a woman will always find a way of making it appear different, with a flower, a ribbon, a piece of lace. But it is good to keep up the habit of dressing to receive him, when he comes home tired and wearied. Not that he cares about the dress, but he cares much for the love which prompted the thought.

And then, how necessary to be punctual, to have all ready, to be on the spot! To miss that first moment is to miss the froth of the new milk, the dew of the

young day! How good to have some scraps of talk ready, to keep the fire of conversation from dying to grey ashes. How wise to be able to look on the bright side of what has depressed and tried the overwrought toiler, and to avoid adding to his worries by enumerating the vexations of the day! He will be willing to hear them presently, when the ebbing tides have returned again, and he should hear them, else there is danger of an estrangement creeping in. How marvellously may a wise and prudent woman extract the sting from the wound, the poison from the hurt; and how often a wife's wise counsel has averted a mistake and suggested a prudent and sound policy, thus fulfilling the ancient couplet of the sage:

> "She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
> And the law of kindness is in her tongue."

There are dark sad days in all our lives, but a wife's love shines then as the light-

house beside the fort. Bearing, believing, hoping, and enduring all things, her love, like God's, never fails. Her idol may have been shattered. She may have awaked to find her husband far other than she expected. She may sit among the ruins of her hopes, not daring to tell another her sad secret. But she will unburden her sorrow to God, and pray, and be patient, and wait; she will continue to do her duty in the home, and by her husband, as she did when all the landscape was bright—and she will do so until her task is done, and either her love conquer, or God take her to His bosom where broken hearts are forever comforted and healed.

Many a husband expects from his wife more than he has any right to: that she should always yield to him, that she should be always sweet and winsome, patient and forbearing, that she should be willing to mind the home whilst he goes out to his politics, his religious meetings,

his pleasures. Take care, husbands, lest you bend the bow to breaking, and stretch the worn string till it snaps. Remember there must be a reciprocity in the give and take of married life; and if you ask for so much, be sure to accept it with thanks, and frank acknowledgment, and the renewed expressions of endearment which cheer lonely hours and make a light like Heaven's smile hover over your vacant seat.

Supposing

"I do not love thee less for what is done,
And cannot be undone. Thy very weakness
Hath brought thee nearer to me, and henceforth
My love will have a sense of pity in it,
Making it less a worship than before."

—LONGFELLOW.

"They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,
And Love mourn'd long and sorrowed after Hope.
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths, where Love had walk'd with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears."

—TENNYSON.

"Nay—sometimes seems it I could even bear
To lay down humbly this love-crown I wear,
Start from my palace, helpless, hopeless, poor,
To see another Queenèd at the door.
If only that the King had done no wrong,
If this my palace, where I dwelt so long,
Were not defiled by falsehood entering in."

I TRUST this is a very unlikely supposition. May it never be realized in your life, my friend! Yet supposing that he should cease to love, or she—what then? Suppose that he who plighted his troth at the marriage-altar should betray it, and withdraw what he promised so faithfully; what should the wife do then? He doesn't take the same interest in her that he once did, or in their common life: hardly notices the pretty dress, or the more becoming way of decking her hair; sits at the table without speaking a word, or answers her remarks with monosyllables; goes quickly from the table under the

excuse of pressing work. Perhaps he is ill, and the wifely heart is full of anxiety. Perhaps business is unusually absorbing and vexatious, and she must not worry him. Yet her heart turns faint with nameless dread. Surely, if either of these suppositions were correct, he would return to his old glad, bright self! But days grow into weeks, and weeks to months, and the clouds brood more heavily than ever, where once blue skies and brilliant sunshine promised to be perpetual. And then, suddenly, the thought flashes upon her, that she is no longer what she was, and perhaps his heart has drifted elsewhere; as a man may turn the gleam of a lantern, now here, now there! What shall she do? It is useless to scold. That will do no good, and it may alienate him further. To escape her pelting words, he will hide himself under the cloak of some such excuse as this, "Oh, that I were free from her! Does not this outburst prove how little she un-

derstands me, or can sympathize with my temperament and character!"

It is unwise to tell others than God. In matters of this kind, it is utterly impossible to expect man or woman to keep your secret. The walls have ears. Love herself, without intending it, will let your secret slip, as quicksilver from the most tenacious grasp. No,—you must not involve him, or yourself, in scandal, which at first will be whispered in the closet, but finally proclaimed upon the housetops. Rather pour out your heart before God, let the walls of your chamber witness to your strong cryings and tears, let the whispered prayers of Hannah be your model, though men, like Eli, misjudge you—you will certainly find that God will show Himself strong on your behalf. It may be that weary years will pass before the answer is given ; but you have the petition you desired of Him, and the woman of a sorrowful spirit shall come again to the scene of her supplica-

tions, bringing her answer, and bursting out in songs of triumphant joy.

It is a mistake to relax your wifely thoughtfulness. When this sorrow befalls a woman, it paralyzes her. She is suddenly deprived of the motive-power which made her life as easy as the quiver of a humming-bird over a flower. In her dress, her housekeeping, her little personal adornments, there had always been one reward, that he would be pleased ; but now that nothing seems to give him interest, why should she care? There is a tendency, then, to neglect her appearance, the table, the home, and let all fall into disorder. In many cases there has been a further abandonment to drink, and perhaps suicide. But such a relaxation of the strength and tenacity of a life's purpose is profoundly mistaken; for in his secret soul, conscious of wrongdoing, he is on the search for some plea of self-justification, and is only too relieved to discover it in this alteration of

his wife's behavior, her neglect of his comfort, and the disarray which has befallen his home.

Least of all, must she permit any coquetry with others. This sometimes has been the mistaken policy of disappointed, heart-weary wives. They have resolved to stimulate and recall the flagging affections of their husbands by appearing to favor other men; not that they have really cared for them, but that they were set on trying any expedient which appeared likely to give back their lost love. It is a hazardous experiment. Not only does it seem to afford the faithless husband a fresh justification for his wrongdoing, but the wife may be drawn into equivocal relations with one whom she secretly despises, but uses in her desperation as a feint.

It seems as though there were no resource but prayer; no line of conduct but patient continuance in well-doing; no deliverance but His advent who, when the

storm was highest, came across the waves, bringing cheer and salvation. At His rebuke the tempest will become calm, and through His grace, working either in illness, or disappointment, or disaster, the cause of alienation will disappear; whilst the heart will recognize and leap to embrace its twin-heart, as in the former time.

But suppose that *she* has ceased to love, my brother, and that there is no response to your fond approaches—what then? This will not justify you in going elsewhere. You have no alternative but to wait the Lord's pleasure, and in the meanwhile to show her all kindly and thoughtful attention. A working man's life was once brought to my attention which well illustrates what I mean. After his conversion, his wife conceived a violent dislike to him, and gave him no peace. However he did not retort save by additional kindness, and rose early enough to be able to do some of the

heaviest offices of their cottage before going to his own laborious work. During the first week, he lit the kitchen fire and put the kettle to boil. But she said never a word. In the following week, he added to this the drawing of the water from the well. But she still appeared to take no notice. The same behavior on his part was pursued for months, only he was always adding new items; but one night his wife threw herself beside him and asked how he could continue thus when she had treated him with such unfeeling stolidity, and he told her that it was not he but Christ in him that had stood victorious through the fiery test, and before they retired to rest she had become as a little child in the Kingdom of God. We must not be weak and pusillanimous, wanting in loving expostulation and in appeals to the better sense; but for the most part, the consistent life, the appeal of unselfish deeds, our unswerving loyalty to the

highest ideals of Christian manhood will, by God's blessing, win the day.

It is most important that a man should never relinquish the high aim and purpose of his career because he is deprived of that wifely coöperation on which he once counted. The greatest victories are those which are snatched from imminent defeat or are won apart from the usual conditions of success. Clive's victories, for instance, at Plassey and Arcot, were the more remarkable because gained in the face of overwhelming numbers, and when his soldiers were in desperate need of rest, ammunition, and food.

God allows these awful sorrows to come into our lives to test us, and to afford an opportunity for the manifestation and growth of the noblest and most unselfish qualities of the soul. These are the battlefields where the rarest laurels are won. These the arenas where, in feats of endurance and patience, souls attain unto the rank of "the first three"

mighties in the court of the Son of God. And when the lesson has been learned, God's Jacobs go forth as Israels, wounded, maimed, limping till they die, but ennobled, royal, and able to scatter blessings, as when Pharaoh bent beneath the trembling hand of the aged patriarch. It is out of such experiences that men and women are able to help others, to communicate comfort, to lighten the heavy burdens, to give a cordial to fainting hearts. And when beneath their touch and voice, despairing ones conceive a new hope, and seize again the shield and sword, and plunge again into the fight for purity, truth, and self-denial, they see the fruit of their tears, and their prayers are compensated.

One often thinks of the myriads, in eastern lands especially, who have never known love. And comparing the cases considered in this chapter with theirs, who does not feel that it is better to suffer a lasting regret, an inevitable pain,

than not to have had the ideal, not to have realized the capacity for love's best dower? No, man or woman, always be glad that you have dreamed love's fairest dreams, even though, like the Naiad's footsteps on the sands, they have left no trace save in memory. Cherish those high and holy imaginings; some day, somewhere, they shall be realized in fact. God shall give you your heart's desires In the meanwhile, guard against cynicism, pessimism, despair.

The Home

"Home's not merely four square walls,
Though with pictures hung and gilded;
Home is where affection calls,
Filled with shrines the heart hath builded!

"Home's not merely roof and room,
It needs something to endear it;
Home is where the heart can bloom,
Where there's some kind heart to cheer it."

MIND that neither of you speak of the home as *my* home, or even *my* house; it must be *our* home, *our* house. And each of you must put honest work into your home-life, if it is to realize the ideal.

"If a man and a woman," so says a modern writer, "are to live together well, they must take the plant of love to the sunniest and securest place in their habitation. They must water it with tears of repentance, or tears of joy; they must jealously remove the destroying insects, and pluck off the dead leaves that the living may take their place. And if they think they have any business in this

life more pressing than the care and culture of this plant, they are undeserving of one another, and time's revenges will be swift and stern."

One of the first requisites in the home-life is politeness. Why should a man cease to treat his wife as a lady because she is always at his side! Is she not as sensitive to notice a slight, as quick to appreciate a tiny attention, as ever she was? Are the trifling courtesies of life robbed of their fragrance, because yielded by her husband? Still, if she drops her handkerchief, he must pick it up, but she must not drop it simply to test him. Still, if she rises to leave the dining-room, he must open the door. Still, if he does not catch what she says, he must say, I beg your pardon. Still, he must save her needless exertion. Let him always act as a Knight in the Order of Christian gentleness, of Christ's high-bred nobility. *Noblesse oblige toujours.* And she must always be the true-born

gentlewoman, because she is one of the King's daughters.

There must be, also, the willingness to ask pardon and to forgive. Sometimes it has happened that the one has been nervously overwrought, and the other unduly sensitive, and a word has flashed like a rapier from its sheath, causing a smart for many an hour afterward, hurting the one who inflicted it even more than the one who suffered. How well would it be if the unkindness were instantly followed by the frank confession and restoration, like God's, to the old blessed place of sunlight. This were better far than to leave the matter to right itself, or to act as though it had never happened, whereas each surely knows that it has left a scar. It is not enough to bring a present from the city, thus, to salve over the sin. Let the poison be pressed out of the wound, so only can it be properly healed. Let there be the frank confession, by which the

two stand together hereafter in a common fight against a common foe.

The home should be founded on religion. There should be the family-prayer, either morning or evening, or both. Nothing will so sweeten and purify the home-life as this. The monks who built the cathedrals of the world, held that wherever the worship of God is set up, obscene demons must hasten to leave the spot; aptly, therefore, they carved the gargoyles at right angles to their buildings; and similarly, the evil spirits pledged to mar the blessed home-happiness make haste to flee, where, day by day, the family gathers for prayer.

But more than this, the spirit of Christ should rule the conversation at the meals, the literature strewn on the side-tables, the expenditure on the household maintenance. Even where it is not familiarly and constantly mentioned, it should control and mould, as the working of God's providence is evident in no book

of the Bible more than in the Book of Esther, though His name is never mentioned there from the beginning to the end.

Dr. Horton has reminded us that when John Eliot was usher in Thomas Hooker's school at Little Baddon, he does not tell us that Hooker talked to him, but says, "Here *the Lord* said unto my dead soul —live! And through the grace of Christ I do live, and I shall live forever. When I came to this blessed family I then saw, and never before, the power of godliness in its lively vigor and efficacy." Would that all our homes were filled with the same heavenly and divine spirit which would attract men as the scent of flowers does the bees. But hearts, like alabaster boxes, must be dedicated to the service of Jesus, and broken over His feet before the house can be filled with the odor of the ointment.

We must exercise a rigid self-regimen, if the atmosphere of our homes is to be

sweet and healthy. Walter Scott always concealed his fits of depression from his friends, because, he said, it was bad enough for *him* to bear them, without inflicting them on others. And Emerson has said: "One topic is peremptorily forbidden to all rational mortals, namely, their distempers. If you have not slept, or if you have slept, or if you have the headache, or leprosy, or thunderstroke, I beseech you by all the angels to hold your peace, and not pollute the morning. Come into the azure and love the day." It is true, however, that they who hide their own passing phases of gloom, must not be careless of the expression of pain or sorrow on the faces of others; but be keen to notice, quick to sympathize. It may be that a little loving tenderness will dissipate the clouds.

The husband should trust the wife with the household expenditures. Let them decide together what style they will adopt, what weekly or monthly sum

they can spend, only let it be within their means. Then it is for *him* to give her the money regularly, and for *her* to lay it out as carefully and judiciously as she knows how. She will do better if she is trusted, than if he is always overhauling her methods and inspecting her accounts. Of course there should be accounts, and once a month they should go into them together. Certainly she should have enough for dress, for little extras of taste, and for general house expenses. But there must be no debt; and there should be a little saved and put sacredly away against a time of illness, or the holidays, or the advent of the little babe. And she should be told how much he is making, and how the outlook is. If there be more, she will be glad, if less, she will brace herself to economize. All the payments should be in ready cash, no bills, no debts, no long-running accounts. And the money should be in hand before the dress is or-

dered, or the new furniture procured for the house.

These are general principles, which must be applied by each couple for themselves; but on the whole, they are sound for all, and it is from lack of principles like these that so many marriages have been wrecked before they have long adventured on life's stormy seas.

William Cobbett tells us, that when he saw his future wife, flushed and buxom, at the washtub, he said: "That's the wife for me." He began life with as little money as any one, but he saw no reason why he should not marry; and he got his fortune in his wife's serviceableness. Young men, when they choose, will do well to see if, beneath the girl's accomplishments and degrees, she can, at a push, cook a mutton chop, and know how long to boil a potato. Of course, a good husband hopes his wife may always be saved from work to which she was not accustomed when he

brought her from her father's home; but if she does no household work herself, she should know how it should be done. And I earnestly advise all young women about to marry, and young wives who are not quite sure of themselves, to set to work to learn how to order a home and cook a dinner, and make a dress, and turn faded curtains or carpets. Nothing demeans a true woman but ignorance of her part in making some bare and barren spot cozy and comfortable for him and for her.

Into our Home-Life Jesus comes as of old to Cana and Bethany. As at Cana, His presence turns the water into wine, the secular to sacred, the commonplace to sacramental, the relationship of time to the chalice of the Eternal and Divine. As at Bethany, He sits at the festal-board or in the porch at the gloaming; accepting the service of Martha and educating her faith; instructing the heart of Mary into the mysteries of death and resurrec-

tion, and preparing her for a supreme act; raising Lazarus from death to life; and binding all in one.

"Not once beat, 'Praise be Thine!'
I see the whole design.
I, who saw power, see now love perfect, too!
Perfect I call Thy plan!
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete—I trust what Thou shalt do."

The Dower of Children

"They are idols of hearts and of households,
They are angels of God in disguise."

—C. M. DICKENSON.

"Ah! what would the world be to us,
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before."

—LONGFELLOW.

A LITTLE child is a strongly-uniting bond between husband and wife. Where there had been signs of alienation, those two tiny hands bring hearts and lives together again; and the two streams commingle, blended in mutual and common affection. And where there had been true love, that love is woven tighter than before, as the parents bend together over the little life in which their two natures are expressed, no longer twain, but one.

"The state of marriage," says Bishop Taylor, "fills up the numbers of the elect, is the mother of the world, preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, churches, and heaven itself." This is an aspect of

married life which we should be foolish to ignore. What God hath cleansed and sanctified, we have no right to call common or unclean. Indeed, there is probably nothing in our human life in which a man approaches so nearly to the Great Life-giver, as in the passing on of his own life to another. It is a function in our human life which should never be thought of without reverence, or contemplated apart from prayer. And the urgency for this becomes more apparent when we remember that the passion, temper, and disposition of either parent may be so transmitted to the child as to affect its entire after existence.

If this book were not written for general circulation I would say more; but I would that the words already written may be deeply pondered. History, physiology, and experience go to show how inevitably parents impress themselves upon their offspring. If the father wishes the child to be pure-hearted, self-

disciplined, strong in character, and godly in aspiration, he must be all that himself. If the mother desires the life which is so marvellously associated with her own to attain her ideal, she must herself realize it. What she thinks, the child will think; what she loves, the child will love; what she allows to dominate herself, will rule its coming years. For the sake of the child, let her abjure passion, refuse strong drink, steep her mind in high and holy thought, surround herself with sweet sights and sounds, hold much commerce with God and heavenly things.

In the view of God's Word, a small family is a calamity. It was the Creator's original command that man should be fruitful and multiply; and the Psalmist says that the father of many sons is like a warrior whose quiver is full of arrows. This view is confirmed by history and experience. The decreasing population of France is becoming a disastrous factor

in her history, and is exciting the gravest alarm among her statesmen—so much so, that they are making generous gifts, and the promise of free education to the children of large families. They know well enough that a nation with a decreasing population can never become a mighty colonizing force, but is bound to sink to a lower and inferior rank in the Parliament of the world. It is to the large families of their peoples that the Anglo-Saxon nations owe their marvellous expansive force, and that the world is becoming colonized and dominated by their children.

Does not universal experience confirm the verdict of history? What child is so pitiable as an only child, who has been the idol of two people, the spoiled object of their exclusive attention, always associated with their pursuits and missing the wholesome contact of other children, whether as playmates or fellow-scholars or comrades in adventure? Brothers and

sisters perform toward each other that most useful function exercised by the pebbles of the sea-beach as they roll and tumble with the tides, chipping off corners and rounding the most obdurate into symmetrical shape.

Children of large families almost always turn out better than only ones. To use the north-country phrase, "they drag each other up." There is a frank *bonhomie*, a chivalrous interest in each other's welfare, a willingness to help each other forward, which are of priceless value in the making of young lives. How good it is for a daughter to have become accustomed to the nursing and care of little brothers and sisters! What an infinite privation it is for a girl never to have had a brother, nor a brother a sister! Unless the direst considerations of health intervene, no married couple should evade the responsibilities of family life.

Where God sends mouths, He sends

the bread to feed them. Those who obey the laws of the Creator may surely count on Him to undertake for them in the results of their obedience to natural law. Sometimes daily bread will be all that He will give, but that need be no matter for regret. Indeed, it may be rather accounted a crowning mercy if the luxuries which pamper appetite and spoil digestion are withheld. The healthiest families in the world are those which have been reared on little else than oatmeal porridge or good wheaten bread.

The nurture of the young child is mostly with the mother. And how sacred the charge! How much she needs of that wisdom which God gives liberally to those who ask! But how certainly may she count on receiving it from Him who has said, "Take this child and nurse it for Me." Mothers, let me be dogmatic!

Never say a thing to a child that is not perfectly true. Never promise anything

which you are not able and prepared to perform. Never lay down conditions on the fulfillment of which you are not prepared to insist. Never threaten a child that you will punish it and then omit the infliction. Never tell a child to do a thing and settle down to condone or pass over its disobedience. Never threaten that you will tell its father, as though you could not assert your own authority, but must make the thought of him a dread rather than a joy. Never pass over a lie, however trivial; an act of disobedience, however trifling; the tiny fault of to-day will have become a worse one to-morrow. Never tell a child that if it does such and such an act, God or you will cease to love it; you know perfectly well that love is not turned aside by sin. Woe to us if it were!

So much for the negative. As for the positive, your heart will find the clue. Only be equable, don't be all smiles to-day and full of touchiness and fretful-

ness to-morrow. Let your child always find you at home to it, and at leisure. Put away your work and reading when it seeks you. Be sure to hear its morning and evening prayers. Take care not to be always delegating your children to the nurse, or despatching them to the nursery; but undertake their training with your own motherly patience and affection. It is better to deny yourself to your friends and to society than to your little ones who bask in your smile as warm sunshine, but pine in your absence as in the winter's cold. I am prepared to think that it will better serve a woman's true happiness if she will give herself to secure the lasting love of her children, than if she were to shine as the central star in the most brilliant constellation that ever sparkled in society.

The father, also, has an important part to fulfill. It is not his province to be always at home, but when he is, it should be a gala time. However much he is

engaged, he should give at least one evening a week, and always Sunday, to his wife and children. He need not be always insisting on the stronger elements in education, but almost unconsciously he will exercise them. He will mould and guide by what he is; and as the children grow older he will become to an increasing extent their companion and associate; and to be with father, to be like him, to do as he does, will become the unwritten code of the home. Ah, father, remember what the lad said when his father and he were climbing the mountain-side: "Take the safe path, father, remember that I am coming." In your habits and self-indulgences the children will copy you.

What lessons the children teach us! There is an exquisite poem of Patmore's, in which he describes his bending over the sleeping form of his child, dismissed to his bed unkissed because for the seventh time he had disobeyed. He tells

how he found the slumbering lashes still wet with tears, and added his own; and then turned to God with a plea that He would in like manner bend over him, forgiving folly and sin. Our Lord taught us to reason thus, when He said, "If ye, being evil, know . . . how much more will your Heavenly Father give." Our children's simple trust in our patience and strength, their artless love, their resort to our side in fear and pain, our own quick response, are mirrors in which we see reflections of things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, but which enter into the heart of man to conceive, of God and His dealings with ourselves.

Common Interests

" From this hour the summer rose
Sweeter breathes to charm us ;
From this hour the winter snows
Lighter fall to harm us ;
Fair or foul, on land or sea,
Come the wind or weather,
Best or worst, whate'er they be,
We shall share together."

" Two souls in sweet accord,
Each for each caring and each self unheard,
Bringing life's discords into perfect tune ;
True to true feeling, and to nature living,
Plighting no faith, nor needing proof nor proving,
Not doubting, and not fearing 'how' or 'where'?
Not caring if less bright or young or fair
Sure to be ever loved, and sure of loving."

—H. C. Von Ranke.

IT is of prime importance that husband and wife entwine their interests. Every additional thing they do together is another bond of union, so long always as they do not seek to rival or excel each other, and each helps the other to realize the common aim.

The beginning of this mutual interest in the same things should date from the days of the courtship. The welding of the two metals will be easier in those days than ever after; and what is begun then will continue to exist through coming days. Let us enumerate some of the many things in which man and wife may share.

There is, first, their religious life. They

can read the Bible and pray together; go to services and religious meetings in company; engage in some common Christian work. How good it is, when they become interested in the same poor people, or Sunday-school scholars, or philanthropic organization; and can plan and scheme, and coöperate for the advancement of what lies so near their hearts. Then there is the weekly, monthly, or yearly setting aside of a proportion of the income for the cause of God, and the consideration of the best means of applying it.

Next, we may rank the common interest in the home. We will suppose that in some cases it will have been furnished by their joint earnings; in others, that the husband will have provided the more substantial furniture, whilst the wife will have procured, and perhaps hemmed and marked, much of the linen. But however this may be, the arrangement will have been largely a joint

affair; and the ordering of the plan, the additions that may be made to its ornaments and comforts, and the regulation of the servants, with all be matters of mutual interest. Though it should always be remembered that it is the wife's function to engage and superintend the servants, yet she will not fail to enlist her husband's interested advice and suggestions.

Surely, also, they should have, as much as possible, common pastimes. There is, probably, one afternoon in the week when, in the summer, they can mount their bicycles and take a run into the country; and in winter they may go out together for the walk, the skate, the visit to picture-gallery, or place of recreation. In the course of the year there will be the holiday trip to seaside or mountain, and even if he must take stronger and more vigorous exercise than she has strength for, it will be somehow arranged that they have sev-

eral days together. It is very well when they can play at some common game. It may seem a trivial remark to make, but it is passing good when the man can be induced to relax so far from the strain of business as to play with his wife at chess, or back-gammon, or draughts, or whatever else they choose.

To read the same books is also a wholesome bond of union. Lending libraries are within the reach of most of us, and it is very desirable to avail ourselves of the chance of keeping in touch with the best new books. When husband and wife are together in the winter evenings, how good after the meal is done to sit within the curtained room, and in turns read biography, poetry, story-book, or sermon. Here is food for thought and fuel for conversation. And often they may break off from what they read to compare their thoughts, to criticise or admire, to seek the dictionary or atlas for the elucidation of some fresh

word or the fixing of a new place on the map. Often the daily press will yield the leading article, the biographical notice, or the report of the great debate, as material for the evening study.

A common interest in the same people and friends is all important. And here the wife needs special wisdom and tact. Of course there are the friends of either, with whom each held happy fellowship in the past. These will be among the first to be welcomed to the new home; and from amongst them many of the life friends will probably be gathered. There are no friends like those whom one has known and loved first. In those early gatherings let there be nothing extravagant—nothing of ostentation and display. Be anxious to show how natural and simple true hospitality is, and that your conception of social life consists, not in the richness of the viands and drinks, but in the wealth of the greeting, the warmth of the heart-fellowship, the

brightness and enjoyment of music, pictures, games, and social intercourse.

In time, other people will call on the wife, and introduce her to their friends. The husband will speak from time to time of those whom he has met in business or in committees. These will perhaps be added to the little circle. But care should be exercised to exclude from it the extravagant, the mere creatures of fashion, the irreligious, those that favor Sunday desecration. There must be no attempt to bid for the recognition of higher circles by the extravagance of the spendthrift, or the fulsome flattery of the sycophant. All relations with friend and neighbor should be simple, true, straightforward, and sincere.

It will perhaps happen that the wife's quick eye may notice that her husband is attracted to certain unmarried girls who are quite innocent and simple-hearted. At first she may feel a start of jealousy, like a stiletto-wound in her heart. She

will be wise to say nothing, and certainly not to find fault with, and criticise them. It will obviously be quite as well if she can direct such a course as shall not include them in its compass. But if this be impossible, it will be better for her to enter into their friendship with him, and to see to it that his friends are her friends too.

Would that these words could be written where every wife might read them. Do not set yourself against your husband's friends. You may not be equally drawn to them, and may wish that they and he had never come into contact; but if he is steadfastly devoted to them, be willing to be pleasant and agreeable, invite them to your home, and act toward them in the power of a God-centred will, showing them all kindness, and trusting in your Heavenly Father to avert all harm. This is a better policy a thousand times over than to expose him to the temptation of making private arrangements to meet them.

What is addressed to the wife applies, of course, equally to the husband. He must be pleasant to his wife's friends; to her mother and sisters especially. There need be no friction, no collision between the two homes. But it goes without saying, that where love exists in its warmest, holiest, deepest moods, there will be no difficulty in these matters, because each will read the other's thoughts, and detect instantly the shadow cast there by the presence of any against whom there is an inexplicable but inevitable antipathy. This will be sufficient to render it impossible for either to take further pleasure in a companionship that might otherwise have been agreeable. One may say, here, to one's brothers, that women are, for the most part, true in their intuitions about character, and that we will probably be wise, if we avoid those about whom our wives have a strong and fixed misgiving.

It is beneficial when a man has a hobby,

some special interest, some subject with which he has an extensive and accurate acquaintance. It will give a new object to their joint excursions and holidays. Suppose it is botany or zoölogy, what an arranging of specimens there will be! Suppose it is photography; perhaps *she* will be trusted to develop the negatives. Perhaps it is the violin, and *she* must play the piano accompaniment. Perhaps it is gardening, and *she* will have her share in raking and watering. In boating, *she* can steer; in sailing, *she* may be a whole boat's crew in one. And thus they grow together as the years pass, and life becomes ever richer. The two streams blend more absolutely than ever, and with augmenting volume and deepening channel, flow toward the bosom of the Eternal Ocean.

And even if they are called to be severed for weeks or months from each other, they will keep in step, and their hearts will chime across the separating

distance. Neither distance nor length of days can sever hearts that meet in God, that have found each other. There is a wireless telegraphy by which they speak to each other, though oceans and continents intervene. It is said that from a balloon which is a speck in the sky, the aeronaut may fire gun-cotton on the earth; but this I know, the hearts that love can fire one another with hidden secret sparks from the Antipodes—perhaps from Heaven. That is why I love so deeply those latter pages in the life of Lawrence Oliphant. If you have not read them, read them.

Darby and Joan

"John Anderson, my Jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither.
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' one anither;
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my Jo."

"Hand in hand when our life was May,
Hand in hand when our hair is grey,
Shadow and sun for every one
As the years roll on.
Hand in hand till the long night-tide
Gently covers us, side by side.
Ah, lad—though we know not when—
Love will be with us ever then!
Always the same, Darby, my own,
Always the same to your old wife Joan."

OUR faces at fifty, sixty, seventy, tell many tales. They are written over with legends which are hieroglyphics to most, but to which love holds the key. Those grey hairs came in that long absence from each other when the heart was sometimes sick with fear. Those lines about the mouth and eye were the result of that long anxiety over the boy who seemed about to take the wrong turn. Those crow's-feet and wrinkles were left by the awful anxiety of that business crisis. Withered, scarred, bent and old, the watch-case is not in quite the same condition on the golden wedding-day as it was on that day, fifty years before,

which it commemorates. But the love is unchanged. And though winter has cast her hoar-frost with lavish hand on the bent head, there is summer—perpetual summer—in the heart.

> "Yes, 'tis summer in the heart;
> Snows may fall and tear-drops start,
> But the soul that loves, forever
> Keepeth summer in the heart."

To the aged couple, as they sit together on the ridge of the hill of life in the summer twilight, what a glimpse there is backward into the vale through which they have travelled together for so many years! They can now trace the way by which they have been led, and confess that goodness and mercy have followed them all their days. They see where they made mistakes, but these have been forgiven, and the consequences neutralized by the alchemy of the divine grace. They discern the graves over which they bent together, the Ebenezer stones they

reared, the dark, dense woods they traversed, and the sunlit eminences on which they stood hand-in-hand amid the gleams of prosperity and success—all live again in their memories which, though dull to recall the impressions of yesterday, are retentive enough for those of the distant past. Live, young people, with the prospect of that review before you; that, when it comes, it may bring you sunny and blessed memories!

Dr. Chalmers used to say that every man should have a Sabbatic decade at the close of his life when, after sixty years of earnest endeavor, he should have ten years for review and rest and preparation for the Eternal Home. It is to be desired for us all, and should be the aim of each. Well is it when life's toils have brought sufficient remuneration to secure a competence for our last years, and for the dear partner of our life. For what can invest the evening hours of a man's life with keener anguish than the knowledge

that in the darkening night of his wife's bereavement there will be the additional pain of threadbare penury and helpless dependence upon others.

To the aged, grandchildren are a source of perpetual enjoyment. It is somehow easy for them to become children again with their children's children; and often a droll comradeship springs up between the venerable grandparent and the grandchild. On the part of the one there is willingness to listen, ability to spend an unlimited number of hours, and aptness at being greatly interested in the trifles which bulk so large in a child's life. How beautiful are those photographs of Mr. Gladstone and Miss Dorothy Drew, in which the veteran's furrowed face sets off the sweet winsome features of his granddaughter!

In response, grandchildren have a patronizing air with the aged which is very charming. They lead them off to see their treasures, the dear little kitties,

"what can't see," the little ducklings swimming after their mother on the pond, the squirrel which will take his nuts from their hand, or the beautiful big caterpillar which they have caught crawling over the gravel path. They admit them into their confidences and hopes, not without some knowledge of their aptitude for spoiling. They talk garrulously and fast of matters which they suppose are as new to them as to themselves. The little ones indeed seem to think that they have received a charge to be specially mindful of the aged, and to this they loyally devote themselves.

And so the aged couple are sweethearts still. Their love is ripe and mellow. The river may not froth and foam as it did in early days, but it is quieter, because it is deeper, fuller and more weighted with its responsibilities. April with its clouds and sunshine, May with its blooms of promise, June with its maturing beauty, July with its long unshad-

owed days, August with its goldening colors, September with its harvests of corn and fruit, have yielded to October, with its second summer, but there is a slight chill in the air which forebodes the fall of the leaf. Yet the love which has lighted their pathway smiles on them still. Were life to come over again, each would choose the other for another spell of fifty years. And the desire is deep in each heart, that in death they may not be long divided; nay, each thinks that it would be impossible to survive the other and live long alone. But each hopes to close the eyes of the other in the last sleep, that the lot of loneliness and bereavement may not befall that other soul which is dearer than self. On such love, faithful and true till death, the angels, on their way home to God, turn aside to look.

For such, assuredly, there must be reunion and companionship in the world where love is supreme. That there will

be recognition in that world is, thank God, not doubtful. Were there no other proof, it would be sufficient to adduce the Resurrection of our Lord, in which He was identified by those who had known Him in the days of His flesh. The most incredulous of them recognized Him, and cried, "My Lord and my God." And He addressed Mary in the familiar tone she knew so well, teaching that the intonations of the voice in the spiritual body will be not altogether strange. But there will be more than recognition, there will be Love. In his exquisite Psalm of Love, the Apostle anticipates the time when prophecy, tongues and knowledge shall pass away, whilst Faith, Hope and Love shall abide; and the greatest of these is Love. Granted that in Heaven, as Jesus said, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, yet those who have loved with an utter devotion and oneness, will be permitted the added pleasure of enjoying Heaven together. Lovely

and pleasant in their lives—surely in Death and Eternity they will not be divided.

The Bible so often speaks of sitting with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, classing together grandfather, father and grandson, that we may cherish the hope that family life will not be entirely obliterated amid "those solemn troops and sweet societies." And when it is promised to Daniel to stand in his lot, at the end of the days, it may be that this is referred to. What a muster that will be, when the successive generations stand together; and when the heads and founders of godly families shall meet with their latest descendants, according to the promise: "The Spirit which I have put upon thee shall not depart from thy seed, or thy seed's seed, from henceforth forever."

There are innumerable cases on record of the fulfillment of that promise. The annals of godly families are full of in-

stances of this spiritual succession, in virtue of which the children have followed in their fathers' steps, taken up their fathers' work, preached in their pulpits, or devoted themselves to the fulfillment of their cherished ideals. God still keeps His mercy for thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments. We do not believe that piety is hereditary, and can be passed like genius from father to child. But certainly a prepossession in favor of a godly life is a gracious inheritance; and in answer to believing prayer, God does, in certain families, manifestly grant a godly succession from generation to generation.

Aged friends, pray for us. The rush and turmoil of your life have somewhat subsided. You have crossed the stormy seas and lie, safe-moored in the harbor, bathed in the evening afterglow. Now lift up your hearts in prayer for sons and daughters who are in life's mid-passage,

and for the bright boys and girls who are venturing forth; and teach us the secret of the love which has blessed your days. Warn us, if we are missing the best, and call us back to the safer, better way. So a trail of light shall mark your sunset, and the heavens will be long irradiated with the beauty of the sundown.

"Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children; and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it."

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